

covert way of insinuating that a member of the House used his political influence for his own aggrandizement, and that the Governor had been made a cat's-paw.

Mr Saunders again states that the war originated in a struggle *for* land. It did not; it originated in a struggle *about* land. The value of the land struggled for was nothing, but the value of the principle which it involved was everything; and to uphold that principle was the war declared, and for that purpose only.²³

The ghastly incidents which became known as the Maungatapu murders generated great public excitement and demand for news. On June 13, 1866, James Dudley, James De Pontius, John Kempthorne and Felix Mathieu who were travelling from Deep Creek to Nelson were murdered by Richard Burgess (alias Hall), William (alias Phil Levy) and Thomas Kelly (alias Hannon). A day earlier, James Battle had suffered a similar fate at the hands of John Joseph Sullivan. Elliott attributed these crimes to the convict elements among the gold fortune-seekers that flocked into Nelson, especially from the Australian colonies. The six day long trial of the murderers by jury and their subsequent execution were reported in detail. Its popularity as the first of its kind in the colony probably helped to increase the circulation of the paper.

Foreign news

The *Nelson Examiner* was, for a long time, the only source of home news for the Nelson settlers. In keeping the pioneering settlers in touch with the rest of the world, Elliott provided news from Britain, the rest of Europe, the American colonies and other colonial societies. Brief foreign news reports were usually issued to be followed by full reports, and bylines from overseas newspapers were used to fill gaps in slack time. When there was a sudden inflow of overseas news or an exclusive despatch from a foreign correspondent, it was often published in a supplementary issue. While the *Nelson Examiner* reported the regal pomp and opulence of the King of Dahomey (now Benin) in the 1860s, the affluence and military formation of the Asante King Koffee Calcalli (Kofi Karikari),²⁴ gold and other mineral discoveries in California and elsewhere, the politico-economic progress in the Australian colonies, and took active part in advocating a forcible end to the Chinese influx into Melbourne in 1857, reporting of war news remained the staple of foreign news.

The secret and deceitful diplomatic manoeuvres preceding the outbreak of the Crimean War (1853-1856) and the battles of the war attracted regular coverage. So did the severe privation suffered by the English forces, the adverse economic effects of the war on mercantile marine in the South Pacific, and false speculations following the death of Czar Nicholas I of Russia about the end of the war. The